

MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2022

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATIVE DAY

The House met at 5:00 p.m. and was called to order by Mr. Speaker Sexton.

The proceedings were opened with prayer by Rep. Vaughan.

Representative Vaughan led the House in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

The roll call was taken with the following results:

Present..... 89

Representatives present were Alexander, Baum, Beck, Boyd, Bricken, Byrd, Calfee, Campbell S, Camper, Carringer, Casada, Cepicky, Chism, Clemmons, Cochran, Cooper, Crawford, Curcio, Darby, Dixie, Eldridge, Farmer, Freeman, Gant, Garrett, Gillespie, Grills, Hakeem, Halford, Hall, Harris, Haston, Hawk, Hazlewood, Helton, Hicks G, Hicks T, Hodges, Holsclaw, Howell, Hulsey, Hurt, Jernigan, Johnson C, Johnson G, Keisling, Lafferty, Lamar, Lamberth, Leatherwood, Littleton, Love, Mannis, Marsh, McKenzie, Miller, Mitchell, Moody, Moon, Ogles, Parkinson, Powell, Powers, Ragan, Ramsey, Reedy, Rudd, Rudder, Russell, Sexton J, Shaw, Sherrell, Smith, Sparks, Stewart, Terry, Thompson, Todd, Vaughan, Vital, Warner, Weaver, White, Whitson, Williams, Windle, Wright, Zachary, Mr. Speaker Sexton -- 89

EXCUSED

The Speaker announced that the following members have been excused, pursuant to requests under **Rule No. 20**:

Representative Darby

Representative Doggett; illness

Representative Carr; illness

Representative Griffey; illness

Representative Faison

Representative Kumar; personal

PRESENT IN CHAMBER

Reps. Darby and Lynn were recorded as being present in the Chamber.

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COMMUNICATION
January 31, 2022

Christopher Lance Sledge
1150 State Street
Bowling Green, KY, 42101

Re: Underground Utility Damage Enforcement Board

Dear Mr. Sledge,

This letter is to inform you, acting pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated, § 65-31-114, I am appointing you to serve as a member of the Underground Utility Damage Enforcement Board. Your term begins immediately, ends June 30, 2023, and is served at the pleasure of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as the appointing authority.

I am forwarding a copy of this letter to Kenneth C. Hill, Chairman of the Tennessee Public Utility Commission. Mr. Hill's office will be contacting you in the near future regarding this appointment.

I am confident that you will perform the duties of the office with the high standard of professionalism, dedication, and integrity that the citizens of Tennessee deserve and expect of their public servants.

Best Wishes,

/s/ Speaker Cameron Sexton

cc: Lt. Gov. Randy McNally
Chairman Kenneth C. Hill - Tennessee Public Utility Commission
Kevin Johnson
Jade Cooper
Spenser Carder
Connie Ridley
Karen Garrett
Anastasia Campbell
Tammy Letzler

COMMUNICATION
January 31, 2022

Chris Massaro, Director of Athletics
MTSU Box 77
1301 E. Main St.
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Re: Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame Board

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Dear Mr. Massaro,

This letter is to inform you, acting pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated, § 4-3-5404, I am reappointing you to serve as a member of the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame Board. Your term begins immediately, ends July 1, 2025, and is served at the pleasure of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as the appointing authority.

I am forwarding a copy of this letter to Mark Ezell, Commissioner of the Department of Tourist Development. Mr. Ezell's office will be contacting you in the near future regarding this appointment.

I am confident that you will perform the duties of the office with the high standard of professionalism, dedication, and integrity that the citizens of Tennessee deserve and expect of their public servants.

Best Wishes,

/s/ Speaker Cameron Sexton

cc: Lt. Gov. Randy McNally
Commissioner Mark Ezell – Department of Tourist Development
Kevin Johnson
Jade Cooper
Spenser Carder
Connie Ridley
Karen Garrett
Anastasia Campbell
Tammy Letzler

SPONSORS ADDED

Under **Rule No. 43**, the following members were permitted to add their names as sponsors as indicated below, the prime sponsor of each having agreed to such addition:

House Joint Resolution No. 735 Rep. Mitchell as prime sponsor.

House Joint Resolution No. 737 Reps. Terry, Baum and Sparks as prime sponsors.

House Joint Resolution No. 738 Rep. T. Hicks as prime sponsor.

House Joint Resolution No. 739 Rep. T. Hicks as prime sponsor.

ENROLLED BILLS
January 28, 2022

MR. SPEAKER: Your Chief Engrossing Clerk begs leave to report that we have carefully compared House Joint Resolutions Nos. 669, 670, 671, 672, 693, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700,

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701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707 and 708; and find same correctly enrolled and ready for the signatures of the Speakers.

GREG GLASS, Chief Engrossing Clerk

SIGNED
January 28, 2022

The Speaker announced that he had signed the following: House Joint Resolutions Nos. 669, 670, 671, 672, 693, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707 and 708.

GREG GLASS, Chief Engrossing Clerk

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE
January 28, 2022

MR. SPEAKER: I am directed to return to the House, House Joint Resolutions Nos. 669, 670, 671, 672, 693, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707 and 708; signed by the Speaker.

RUSSELL A. HUMPHREY, Chief Clerk

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

On motion, pursuant to **Rule No. 17**, the following resolutions listed were introduced and referred to the appropriate Committee:

House Resolution No. 129 -- General Assembly, Review Or Ratification of Rules - Ratifies and approves the amendments and revisions to the Tennessee Rules of Criminal Procedure as promulgated and adopted by the Tennessee Supreme Court. by *Curcio.

House Criminal Justice Committee

House Resolution No. 130 -- General Assembly, Review Or Ratification of Rules - Ratifies and approves the amendments and revisions to the Tennessee Rules of Evidence as promulgated and adopted by the Tennessee Supreme Court. by *Curcio.

House Civil Justice Committee

***House Joint Resolution No. 740** -- Naming and Designating - Designates the week of February 28, 2022, as "Tennessee Music Therapy Week.". by *Sparks.

House Naming & Designating Committee

RESOLUTIONS

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Pursuant to **Rule No. 17**, the following resolution was introduced and placed on the Consent Calendar for February 2, 2022:

***House Joint Resolution No. 741** -- Memorials, Sports - Hume-Fogg Academic High School girls' volleyball team, TSSAA Division I, Class AA State Champions. by *Beck.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTIONS
(Congratulatory and Memorializing)

Pursuant to **Rule No. 17**, the resolutions listed were noted as being placed on the Consent Calendar for February 2, 2022:

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 808** -- Memorials, Recognition - Kingsport Farmers Market, Best Farmers Market in East Tennessee. by *Lundberg.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 809** -- Memorials, Retirement - Dr. Laura Ellen Witherspoon. by *Watson.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 810** -- Memorials, Retirement - Daisy Madison. by *Watson, *Gardenhire.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 811** -- Memorials, Recognition - Rosie Bozeman, THCA Caregiver of the Year. by *Watson.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 812** -- Memorials, Recognition - YMCA of Metropolitan Chattanooga, 150th anniversary. by *Watson, *Gardenhire.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 813** -- Memorials, Sports - Heather Ott, Chattanooga Times Free Press Coach of the Year. by *Watson.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 814** -- Memorials, Recognition - Travis Close, 2022 President of Tennessee REALTORS. by *Watson.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 815** -- Memorials, Death - Judge Barbara Haynes. by *Yarbro, *Swann.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 816** -- Memorials, Recognition - Jacob Baggett. by *Yager, *McNally.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 817** -- Memorials, Recognition - Mike and Lindy Gaughan, BEST Award. by *Haile.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 818** -- Memorials, Professional Achievement - Scott Langford, 2021-2022 Supervisor of the Year. by *Haile.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

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On motion, the following bills were introduced and passed first consideration:

***House Bill No. 2048** -- Insurance, Health, Accident - As introduced, prohibits a health insurer from considering the location where complex rehabilitation technology will be used when making a medical necessity determination; requires health insurers to offer a prior authorization process for complex rehabilitation technology coverage determinations; requires, if a health insurer notifies a covered person that complex rehabilitation technology will be fully covered under a health benefit plan, the insurer to pay the full cost of the complex rehabilitation technology. - Amends TCA Title 56 and Title 71. by *Jernigan.

House Bill No. 2049 -- Emergency Communications Districts - As introduced, changes how the emergency communications board calculates the amount of funding each emergency communications district receives annually. - Amends TCA Section 7-86-303. by *Bricken.

House Bill No. 2050 -- Public Contracts - As introduced, prohibits a public entity from entering into a contract with a company unless the contract includes a written certification that the company is not currently engaged in, and will not for the duration of the contract engage in, a boycott of Israel. - Amends TCA Title 4; Title 8; Title 9 and Title 12. by *Williams, *Smith.

***House Bill No. 2051** -- TennCare - As introduced, extends from 60 days to 12 months the period of postpartum coverage for pregnant women who meet certain medical assistance eligibility requirements in accordance with provisions of the American Rescue Plan. - Amends TCA Title 4 and Title 71. by *Lamar.

***House Bill No. 2052** -- Taxes, Sales - As introduced, exempts certain sales of gold, silver, platinum, and palladium coins and bullion from the sales and use tax. - Amends TCA Title 67, Chapter 6. by *Holsclaw.

***House Bill No. 2053** -- Pensions and Retirement Benefits - As introduced, expands the list of retired members of TCRS who may work more than 120 days while continuing to draw retirement allowance to include teachers and school bus drivers if a director of schools certifies that no other certified person is qualified and available for the position. - Amends TCA Title 8, Chapter 35; Title 8, Chapter 36; Title 8, Chapter 37 and Title 49. by *Holsclaw.

***House Bill No. 2054** -- Vital Records - As introduced, authorizes a medical examiner or hospital employee to file a death certificate; removes authority for a person acting as a funeral director who first assumes custody of the dead body to file a death certificate; removes requirement for an attending physician or medical examiner to give notice for delay in completing medication certification for the cause of death to a person acting as a funeral director. - Amends TCA Title 68. by *Campbell S.

***House Bill No. 2055** -- Consumer Protection - As introduced, transfers the consumer advocate division in the office of the attorney general and reporter to the Tennessee public utility commission; renames the division the office of the public advocate. - Amends TCA Title 4; Title 65, Chapter 1, Part 1 and Title 65, Chapter 4, Part 1. by *Ragan.

House Bill No. 2056 -- Energy - As introduced, requires the office of energy programs of the department of environment and conservation to publish its sample solar easement instrument on a publicly accessible area of the department's website. - Amends TCA Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 65; Title 66, Chapter 9, Part 2 and Title 68. by *Hurt.

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***House Bill No. 2057** -- Education - As introduced, requires the department of education to produce an annual report concerning the efficacy of training on reading instruction provided by educator preparation providers; requires revocation of state approval for educator preparation providers that fail to meet certain standards. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *Ragan.

House Bill No. 2058 -- Tobacco, Tobacco Products - As introduced, defines "smokeless nicotine product."; adds smokeless nicotine products to type of products that are age-restricted to persons aged 21 years and older under the Prevention of Youth Access to Tobacco, Smoking Hemp, and Vapor Products Act. - Amends TCA Title 39, Chapter 17, Part 15. by *Gant.

House Bill No. 2059 -- Taxes, Sales - As introduced, permanently exempts from sales and use tax, the retail sale of gun safes and gun safety devices; removes the one-year sales tax holiday. - Amends TCA Title 67, Chapter 6. by *Sparks.

***House Bill No. 2060** -- Animal Cruelty and Abuse - As introduced, prohibits the torture and mistreatment of wild animals. - Amends TCA Title 39, Chapter 17 and Title 70. by *Mannis.

***House Bill No. 2061** -- Campaigns and Campaign Finance - As introduced, specifies that a voter may file a complaint against a local multicandidate political campaign committee with the district attorney general who represents the judicial district in which the voter resides. - Amends TCA Title 2, Chapter 10. by *Mannis.

***House Bill No. 2062** -- Education - As introduced, requires LEAs that issue student identification cards to include on the identification cards the telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. - Amends TCA Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 19 and Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 51. by *Mannis.

House Bill No. 2063 -- Homestead Exemptions - As introduced, increases the amount that must be held as homestead from the sale of real estate that is so situated that homestead cannot be set apart from \$5,000 to \$35,000. - Amends TCA Title 26, Chapter 2, Part 3 and Title 30, Chapter 2, Part 2. by *Mannis.

House Bill No. 2064 -- Election Laws - As introduced, requires nonpartisan elections for chancellors, circuit court judges, criminal court judges, and judges of any other state trial court of record; prohibits a political party from requiring a person to pay a fee in order to run as that political party's candidate for public office. - Amends TCA Title 2 and Title 17. by *Mannis.

***House Bill No. 2065** -- Alcoholic Beverage Commission - As introduced, changes the deadline date, from March 1 to January 15, that the executive director is required to file the annual report detailing the rules promulgated by the commission in the previous year and the rationale for such rules. - Amends TCA Title 57. by *Mannis.

***House Bill No. 2066** -- Solid Waste Disposal - As introduced, increases from 15 to 30, the days in advance of a hearing concerning a proposed landfill approval that the county legislative body or the municipal governing body, or both, and the proposed landfill owner, must circulate notice of the hearing; increases from a three-mile radius to a 20-mile radius, the area in which the proposed landfill owner must provide notice by signs being erected on roads in that

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area leading directly to the proposed landfill site. - Amends TCA Title 68, Chapter 211. by *Dixie.

***House Bill No. 2067** -- Political Parties - As introduced, reduces the percentage of votes required in a gubernatorial or county mayor election that a minor party candidate must receive for the minor party to remain a recognized minor party. - Amends TCA Title 2, Chapter 1 and Title 2, Chapter 13. by *Hulsey.

***House Bill No. 2068** -- Public Health - As introduced, requires a private business who mandates routine COVID-19 testing for a specific category of individuals to require such testing for all employees, contractors with the private business, and such contractors' employees. - Amends TCA Title 14. by *Hulsey.

***House Bill No. 2069** -- Banks and Financial Institutions - As introduced, authorizes licensed money transmitters to maintain their records electronically for the prescribed statutory period of three years. - Amends TCA Title 8; Title 9; Title 45; Title 47; Title 48 and Title 67. by *Hulsey.

***House Bill No. 2070** -- Adoption - As introduced, expands the definition of severe child sexual abuse for purposes of termination of parental rights and giving a parent standing to file a petition to terminate the parental rights of the abusive parent; declares all adoption records to be a public record when 100 years have elapsed since the date the adoption was finalized; makes various other changes in regard to termination of parental rights and adoption. - Amends TCA Title 10, Chapter 7, Part 5; Title 36; Title 37 and Title 68. by *Leatherwood.

***House Bill No. 2071** -- Lottery, Scholarships and Programs - As introduced, requires that the Tennessee HOPE scholarship award amount per student per academic year be no less than 50 percent of the average cost of attendance for the four-year public institutions of higher education for the respective academic year. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *Hakeem.

House Bill No. 2072 -- Tennessee Bureau of Investigation - As introduced, requires that the Tennessee bureau of investigation's annual report on narcotics investigations be presented to the criminal justice committee of the house of representatives and the judiciary committee of the senate by March 1 of each year. - Amends TCA Title 38; Title 39; Title 40 and Title 41. by *Curcio.

House Bill No. 2073 -- Public Health - As introduced, prohibits a place of entertainment that receives public funds of this state, or any political subdivision of this state, from compelling or taking an adverse action to compel a person to provide proof of vaccination for COVID-19. - Amends TCA Title 4, Chapter 21; Title 14; Title 58, Chapter 2 and Title 68. by *Cochran.

***House Bill No. 2074** -- Election Laws - As introduced, requires county election commissions to use only ballot-marking devices or hand-marked ballots and tabulate the ballots using an electronic tabulator or by a hand count; specifies the distance from which a poll watcher may observe the counting and processing of ballots; requires certain security features on paper ballots. - Amends TCA Title 2. by *Griffey.

***House Bill No. 2075** -- Pensions and Retirement Benefits - As introduced, for purposes of computing the number of years of creditable service in the Tennessee consolidated

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retirement system, requires that a member who is employed as a law enforcement officer receive an additional, automatic credit of one year of service for every four years of creditable service the member has earned. - Amends TCA Title 8, Chapter 34; Title 8, Chapter 35 and Title 8, Chapter 36. by *Doggett.

***House Bill No. 2076** -- Correction, Dept. of - As introduced, creates a supplemental pay incentive program for correctional officers of the department who receive 40 hours or more of in-service training per calendar year. - Amends TCA Title 38, Chapter 8, Part 1 and Title 41, Chapter 51. by *Doggett.

House Bill No. 2077 -- Education, Dept. of - As introduced, requires the department to contract for the development of assessments to be annually administered to students in grades nine and 10 in the subjects of English, math, reading, and science to replace certain end-of-course assessments administered as part of the Tennessee comprehensive assessment program; requires the department to develop proposed evaluation guidelines and criteria for educators teaching the grades and subjects for which the new assessments will be administered. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *Haston, *Cepicky, *Byrd, *Doggett, *Hurt, *Rudder, *Carringer, *Weaver, *Lafferty, *Faison.

House Bill No. 2078 -- Salaries and Benefits - As introduced, removes the subminimum wage exception for an employee whose earning or productive capacity is impaired by age, physical, or mental deficiency or injury. - Amends TCA Title 8 and Title 50. by *Bricken.

House Bill No. 2079 -- Education - As introduced, enacts the "Local School District Empowerment Act," which creates a pilot program for the establishment of the office of elected superintendent of schools; requires the department of education to study the pilot program procedures for establishment of the office; adjusts duties of local boards of education in school systems in which the office of elected superintendent of schools is established. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *Wright.

House Bill No. 2080 -- Anatomical Gifts - As introduced, requires a procurement organization or hospital contacting an individual following the death of the decedent for purposes of allowing the individual to make an anatomical gift to explain to the individual that the individual can designate the decedent's whole body or a part, and the process of making an anatomical gift and the condition the decedent's body will be in after the completion of the process. - Amends TCA Title 68. by *Sexton J.

***House Bill No. 2081** -- Medical Occupations - As introduced, establishes standardized pricing for delivery of medical records electronically or on digital media. - Amends TCA Title 50; Title 56; Title 63, Chapter 2 and Title 68, Chapter 11. by *Baum.

***House Bill No. 2082** -- Courts, Municipal - As introduced, expands a municipal court's jurisdiction to include expunction of a conviction for a violation of a municipal ordinance. - Amends TCA Title 16, Chapter 18, Part 3 and Title 40. by *Baum.

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***House Bill No. 2083** -- Education - As introduced, requires educator preparation providers approved by the state board of education to require each candidate enrolled in the provider's educator preparation program to successfully complete at least one course each semester on reading instruction in order for the provider to retain state board approval. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *Baum.

***House Bill No. 2084** -- Alcoholic Beverages - As introduced, designates the Grove at Williamson Family Farm in Rutherford County as a premier type tourist resort for purposes of consumption of alcoholic beverages on the premises. - Amends TCA Title 57, Chapter 4. by *Baum.

House Bill No. 2085 -- Local Education Agencies - As introduced, removes the required open enrollment period and certain open enrollment requirements; requires LEAs to create their own open enrollment policy. - Amends TCA Title 49, Chapter 1; Title 49, Chapter 2 and Title 49, Chapter 6. by *White.

***House Bill No. 2086** -- Students - As introduced, broadens the category of nonresident employees, from only teachers to all LEA employees, whose children may attend a school within the LEA that employs the child's parent, including out of state employees of an LEA whose children attend the LEA, and who may be exempt from a tuition requirement, pursuant to board policy. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *White, *Vaughan.

***House Bill No. 2087** -- Firearms and Ammunition - As introduced, creates the offense of storing a firearm or firearm ammunition in a motor vehicle or boat while the person is not in the motor vehicle or boat unless the firearm or firearm ammunition is kept from ordinary observation and locked within the trunk, utility or glove box, or a locked container securely affixed to the motor vehicle or boat; requires the owner of a firearm to report the loss or theft of the firearm to law enforcement within 24 hours of the discovery of the loss or theft. - Amends TCA Title 39, Chapter 17, Part 13. by *White.

House Bill No. 2088 -- Education - As introduced, removes the exclusion that state colleges or universities may only contract with a local school board within the county or city in which the state college or university is located to operate a training school for pre-kindergarten through grade 12; authorizes state colleges or universities to contract with the state board of education to operate a training school. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *White.

***House Bill No. 2089** -- Public Records - As introduced, exempts records generated as a result of a Handle With Care Program notification, which is an alert provided to a school system regarding a child's potential exposure to an adverse childhood experience, from the open records requirement through July 1, 2027. - Amends TCA Title 10, Chapter 7. by *White.

***House Bill No. 2090** -- Lottery, Scholarships and Programs - As introduced, adds William R. Moore College of Technology as an eligible institution for receipt of Tennessee reconnect grants and Wilder-Naifeh technical skills grants. - Amends TCA Title 49, Chapter 4, Part 9. by *White.

House Bill No. 2091 -- Education, Dept. of - As introduced, changes from October 1 to October 15 the date by which the department is required to submit its annual report regarding the physical education programs and activity for each LEA to the education committees

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pursuant to the Connie Hall Givens Coordinated School Health Improvement Act. - Amends TCA Title 4 and Title 49. by *White.

House Bill No. 2092 -- Education, Dept. of - As introduced, requires the commissioner to notify each LEA when the office of research and education accountability publishes a report germane to kindergarten through grade 12 education. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *White.

House Bill No. 2093 -- Education - As introduced, deletes an obsolete requirement that certain chief law enforcement officers submit a report by September 1, 2021, concerning school security deficiencies and recommendations for security improvement of schools. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *White.

House Bill No. 2094 -- Education, Higher - As introduced, requires the board of regents and state university boards to notify the faculty at the respective institution of any change in the board's tenure policy. - Amends TCA Title 49. by *White.

House Bill No. 2095 -- Board of Regents - As introduced, changes, from five days to seven days, the amount of notice the secretary must give board members of called meetings. - Amends TCA Title 4 and Title 49. by *White.

***House Bill No. 2096** -- Welfare - As introduced, requires the department of human services to obtain authorization from the general assembly before seeking, applying for, accepting, or renewing a waiver of work requirements under the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; prohibits the department from exercising the state's option to provide an exemption from work requirements pursuant to the program; requires the department to assign all individuals subject to the program's work requirements to an employment and training program. - Amends TCA Title 71. by *Lamberth.

***House Bill No. 2097** -- Criminal Offenses - As introduced, makes revisions to the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) Act of 1989, including expanding the definition of racketeering activity. - Amends TCA Title 39, Chapter 12, Part 2. by *Lamberth.

***House Bill No. 2098** -- Criminal Offenses - As introduced, increases the penalty for assault that results in the bodily injury of a law enforcement officer who is discharging the officer's official duties from a Class A misdemeanor to a Class E felony; maintains the 30-day minimum sentence and \$5,000 minimum fine. - Amends TCA Title 39, Chapter 13. by *Lamberth.

***House Bill No. 2099** -- Health, Dept. of - As introduced, clarifies that the annual evaluation report to the general assembly on the adequacy of the department's birth defects registry may be submitted by electronic means. - Amends TCA Title 4; Title 29; Title 33; Title 56; Title 63; Title 68 and Title 71. by *Marsh.

House Bill No. 2100 -- Economic and Community Development - As introduced, enacts the "Employee Ownership, Empowerment, and Expansion Act," to support the growth and expansion of employee-owned businesses. - Amends TCA Title 4; Title 8; Title 9; Title 12, Chapter 3; Title 45; Title 50; Title 56, Chapter 1 and Title 67. by *Marsh.

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House Bill No. 2101 -- Election Laws - As introduced, creates a polling place pilot program in Davidson County jails to provide eligible inmates the opportunity to vote; terminates the program on December 31, 2023. - Amends TCA Title 2; Title 8, Chapter 8 and Title 41. by *Shaw.

House Bill No. 2102 -- Expunction - As introduced, changes the number of days in which a district attorney general may submit recommendations to the court regarding a petition for expunction for offenses related to status as a victim of human trafficking from 60 days to 65 days. - Amends TCA Title 40, Chapter 32. by *Curcio.

***House Bill No. 2103** -- Funeral Directors and Embalmers - As introduced, authorizes licensed funeral directors to sell pre-need funeral contracts and prearrangement insurance policies without registering with the commissioner of commerce and insurance; requires that continuing education completed virtually for renewal of embalmer and funeral director licenses involve continuous two-way transfer of information; defines unlicensed assistants for funeral establishment licensure laws. - Amends TCA Title 62. by *Alexander.

House Bill No. 2104 -- TennCare - As introduced, directs the governor to seek a new TennCare waiver within 180 days of the effective date of this act to provide medical assistance coverage for the same population groups and services as the Insure Tennessee proposal; clarifies that the amendment takes effect upon federal approval. - Amends TCA Title 71, Chapter 5. by *Hakeem, *Hardaway, *Mitchell, *Thompson, *Clemmons, *Parkinson, *Chism, *Miller, *Lamar, *Dixie, *Shaw, *Towns, *Freeman.

House Bill No. 2105 -- Economic and Community Development - As introduced, enacts the "Healthy Food Financing Act"; levies a \$0.05 tax on beverage containers to fund the act. - Amends TCA Title 4 and Title 67. by *Hakeem, *Hardaway, *Mitchell, *Clemmons, *Thompson, *Parkinson, *Chism, *Miller, *Lamar, *Dixie, *Shaw, *Towns, *Freeman.

***House Bill No. 2106** -- Education, Curriculum - As introduced, requires, rather than recommends, that the course of instruction for students in grades five through eight include curricula designed to educate students in black history and black culture; requires the department of education, rather than the state board of education, to include multicultural diversity in frameworks and curricula for students in kindergarten through grade 12. - Amends TCA Section 49-6-1006. by *Hakeem, *Hardaway, *Chism, *McKenzie, *Thompson, *Towns.

House Bill No. 2107 -- Pensions and Retirement Benefits - As introduced, removes the requirement that the actuarial equivalent be paid to certain emergency medical services personnel, police officers, and firefighters who are eligible for early service retirement at 25 years of creditable service; requires that such persons who retire on or after January 1, 2023, be paid a full, unreduced retirement allowance and receive insurance coverage otherwise provided to members who are 100 percent vested in the service retirement benefit; requires such persons to also receive a supplemental bridge benefit. - Amends TCA Title 8, Chapter 34; Title 8, Chapter 35; Title 8, Chapter 36 and Title 8, Chapter 37. by *Moody.

***House Bill No. 2108** -- Textbooks - As introduced, requires that all math, science, and social studies textbooks and instructional materials be aligned to state academic standards by a certain date; prohibits the state board of education from granting waivers for textbooks or

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instructional materials that are not aligned to state academic standards by that date. - Amends TCA Title 49, Chapter 6. by *Moody, *Cepicky.

***House Bill No. 2109** -- TennCare - As introduced, requires that doula services be provided to recipients of TennCare; requires that the doula services be performed by a person who has received certification from the department of health. - Amends TCA Title 4; Title 8; Title 56; Title 63 and Title 71. by *Lamar.

***House Bill No. 2110** -- Banks and Financial Institutions - As introduced, enacts the "LIBOR Discontinuance and Replacement Act." - Amends TCA Title 47. by *Boyd.

***House Bill No. 2111** -- Labor - As introduced, requires the department of labor and workforce development to conduct a study of the Child Labor Act of 1976 and the Tennessee Protection of Minor Performers Act, and to report its findings to the governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, the speaker of the senate, and the legislative librarian no later than December 1, 2022. - Amends TCA Title 4; Title 9; Title 50 and Title 67. by *Curcio.

House Bill No. 2112 -- Election Laws - As introduced, requires the comptroller of the treasury to establish an office of election integrity within the department of audit to perform and supervise election audits. - Amends TCA Title 2; Title 4, Chapter 29; Title 4, Chapter 3, Part 3 and Title 8, Chapter 4. by *Warner.

SENATE BILLS TRANSMITTED

On motion, the Senate Bill listed below, transmitted to the House, was held on the Clerk's desk pending third consideration of the companion House Bill as noted:

***Senate Bill No. 1** -- Health Care - As introduced, establishes independent dispute resolution procedures for emergency services and balance bills. - Amends TCA Title 33; Title 56; Title 63 and Title 68. by *Watson, *Swann, *Gardenhire, *Powers, *Haile, *Jackson, *Pody, *Reeves, *Rose, *Walley. (HB2 by *Smith, *Hawk, *White, *Terry, *Helton, *Moon, *Baum, *Rudd)

HOUSE BILLS ON SECOND CONSIDERATION

On motion, bills listed below passed second consideration and were referred by the Speaker to Committee or held on the Clerk's desk as noted:

***House Bill No. 1993** -- Mobile Homes and Manufactured Buildings -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

***House Bill No. 1994** -- Safety, Dept. of -- House State Government Committee

House Bill No. 1995 -- Secretary of State -- House State Government Committee

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***House Bill No. 1996** -- Trade Regulation -- House Commerce Committee

House Bill No. 1997 -- Administrative Procedure (UAPA) -- House State Government Committee

***House Bill No. 1998** -- Law Enforcement -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

House Bill No. 1999 -- Pharmacy, Pharmacists -- House Health Committee

***House Bill No. 2000** -- Teachers, Principals and School Personnel -- House Education Instruction Committee

***House Bill No. 2001** -- Taxes, Hotel Motel -- House Local Government Committee

***House Bill No. 2002** -- Highways, Roads and Bridges -- House Transportation Committee

***House Bill No. 2003** -- Teachers, Principals and School Personnel -- House Education Administration Committee

House Bill No. 2004 -- Firearms and Ammunition -- House Criminal Justice Committee

House Bill No. 2005 -- Professions and Occupations -- House Health Committee

***House Bill No. 2006** -- Orders of Protection -- House Civil Justice Committee

***House Bill No. 2007** -- Taxes, Privilege -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

***House Bill No. 2008** -- Insurance, Motor Vehicles -- House Insurance Committee

***House Bill No. 2009** -- Criminal Offenses -- House Criminal Justice Committee

***House Bill No. 2010** -- Appeal and Review -- House Criminal Justice Committee

***House Bill No. 2011** -- Election Laws -- House Local Government Committee

***House Bill No. 2012** -- Taxes, Sales -- House Finance, Ways, and Means Committee

House Bill No. 2013 -- Criminal Offenses -- House Criminal Justice Committee

***House Bill No. 2014** -- Public Health -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

***House Bill No. 2015** -- Education -- House Education Administration Committee

***House Bill No. 2016** -- Education, Higher -- House Education Administration Committee

***House Bill No. 2017** -- Children -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

***House Bill No. 2018** -- Jails, Local Lock-ups -- House State Government Committee

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***House Bill No. 2019** -- University of Tennessee -- House Education Administration Committee

***House Bill No. 2020** -- Bail, Bail Bonds -- House Criminal Justice Committee

***House Bill No. 2021** -- Teachers, Principals and School Personnel -- House Education Administration Committee

House Bill No. 2022 -- Children's Services, Dept. of -- House Civil Justice Committee

House Bill No. 2023 -- Child Abuse -- House Civil Justice Committee

House Bill No. 2024 -- Children's Services, Dept. of -- House Civil Justice Committee

House Bill No. 2025 -- Children's Services, Dept. of -- House Civil Justice Committee

House Bill No. 2026 -- State Employees -- House State Government Committee

House Bill No. 2027 -- Health, Dept. of -- House Health Committee

***House Bill No. 2028** -- Students -- House Education Administration Committee

House Bill No. 2029 -- Salaries and Benefits -- House Commerce Committee

***House Bill No. 2030** -- Taxes -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

***House Bill No. 2031** -- Attorney General and Reporter -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

***House Bill No. 2032** -- Dentists and Dentistry -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

***House Bill No. 2033** -- Real Property -- House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee

***House Bill No. 2034** -- Animal Cruelty and Abuse -- House Criminal Justice Committee

House Bill No. 2035 -- Holidays and Days of Special Observance -- House Naming & Designating Committee

House Bill No. 2036 -- Jails, Local Lock-ups -- House State Government Committee

House Bill No. 2037 -- Driver Licenses -- House Transportation Committee

House Bill No. 2038 -- Political Parties -- House Local Government Committee

***House Bill No. 2039** -- Municipal Government -- House Local Government Committee

***House Bill No. 2040** -- Criminal Procedure -- Caption Bill Held on House Desk

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***House Bill No. 2041** -- Motor Vehicles -- House Transportation Committee

***House Bill No. 2042** -- Taxes, Sales -- House Finance, Ways, and Means Committee

***House Bill No. 2043** -- Controlled Substances -- House Criminal Justice Committee

***House Bill No. 2044** -- Motor Vehicles, Titling and Registration -- House Transportation Committee

***House Bill No. 2045** -- Motor Vehicles, Titling and Registration -- House Transportation Committee

House Bill No. 2046 -- Child Abuse -- House Civil Justice Committee

House Bill No. 2047 -- Corporations, Not for Profit -- House Commerce Committee

CONSENT CALENDAR

***House Joint Resolution No. 734** -- Memorials, Death - Maurice Grooms. by *Clemmons.

***House Joint Resolution No. 735** -- Memorials, Death - Randy Kevin Clark. by *Clemmons, *Mitchell.

***House Joint Resolution No. 736** -- Memorials, Death - Fred L. Myers, Jr. by *Faison.

***House Joint Resolution No. 737** -- Memorials, Personal Occasion - Harry L. Shumate, Sr., 95th birthday. by *Rudd, *Terry, *Baum, *Sparks.

***House Joint Resolution No. 738** -- Memorials, Sports - Milligan University men's and women's cross country teams, national champions. by *Alexander, *Hicks T.

***House Joint Resolution No. 739** -- Memorials, Sports - Alyssa Bearzi, Milligan University, women's individual title, NAIA cross country championship. by *Alexander, *Hicks T.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 799** -- Memorials, Professional Achievement - J.J. Dower, National Auctioneers Association Hall of Fame. by *Yager.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 800** -- Memorials, Death - T.Q. "Buzz" Heidel, Jr. by *Yager.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 801** -- Memorials, Death - Gladys Best. by *Yager, *Watson.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 802** -- Memorials, Professional Achievement - Dr. Kenneth Hanna, Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association Hall of Fame. by *Yager, *Watson.

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***Senate Joint Resolution No. 804** -- Memorials, Retirement - Dr. Donald Ryder. by *Massey, *Briggs, *Yager, *McNally.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 806** -- Memorials, Retirement - Knoxville Chief of Police Eve Thomas. by *Massey, *Briggs, *McNally.

***Senate Joint Resolution No. 807** -- Memorials, Retirement - Dr. Arie Nettles. by *Massey, *Briggs.

Rep. Alexander moved that all members voting aye on House Joint Resolution No. 738 be added as co-prime sponsors, which motion prevailed with the following members not added pursuant to the signed Sponsor Exclusion form: Reps. Ragan and Todd.

Rep. Alexander moved that all members voting aye on House Joint Resolution No. 739 be added as co-prime sponsors, which motion prevailed with the following members not added pursuant to the signed Sponsor Exclusion form: Reps. Ragan and Todd.

Rep. Mannis moved that all members of the Knox County delegation voting aye on Senate Joint Resolution No. 804 be added as co-prime sponsors, which motion prevailed with the following members not added pursuant to the signed Sponsor Exclusion form: Reps. Ragan and Todd.

Rep. Mannis moved that all members of the Knox County delegation voting aye on Senate Joint Resolution No. 806 be added as co-prime sponsors, which motion prevailed with the following members not added pursuant to the signed Sponsor Exclusion form: Reps. Ragan and Todd.

Rep. Rudd moved that all members of the Rutherford County delegation be added as co-prime sponsors on House Joint Resolution No. 737, which motion prevailed with the following members not added pursuant to the signed Sponsor Exclusion form: Reps. Ragan and Todd.

The Speaker requested the Journal reflect that Rep. Alexander's motion to add all members voting in the affirmative was on House Joint Resolutions Nos. 738 and 739.

Pursuant to **Rule No. 50**, Rep. Zachary moved that all House Bills having companion Senate Bills and are on the Clerk's desk be conformed and substituted for the appropriate House Bill, all Senate Joint Resolutions confirming appointments on the Clerk's desk be substituted for House Joint Resolutions confirming the same appointments, all Senate and House Bills on the Consent Calendar be passed on third and final consideration, all House Resolutions and House Joint Resolutions be adopted, and all Senate Joint Resolutions on the Consent Calendar be concurred in, which motion prevailed by the following vote:

Ayes	91
Noes	0

Representatives voting aye were: Alexander, Baum, Beck, Boyd, Bricken, Byrd, Calfee, Campbell S, Camper, Carringer, Casada, Cepicky, Chism, Clemmons, Cochran, Cooper, Crawford, Curcio, Darby, Dixie, Eldridge, Farmer, Freeman, Gant, Garrett, Gillespie, Grills,

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Hakeem, Halford, Hall, Harris, Haston, Hawk, Hazlewood, Helton, Hicks G, Hicks T, Hodges, Holsclaw, Howell, Hulsey, Hurt, Jernigan, Johnson C, Johnson G, Keisling, Lafferty, Lamar, Lamberth, Leatherwood, Littleton, Love, Lynn, Mannis, Marsh, McKenzie, Miller, Mitchell, Moody, Moon, Ogles, Parkinson, Potts, Powell, Powers, Ragan, Ramsey, Reedy, Rudd, Rudder, Russell, Sexton J, Shaw, Sherrell, Smith, Sparks, Stewart, Terry, Thompson, Todd, Vaughan, Vital, Warner, Weaver, White, Whitson, Williams, Windle, Wright, Zachary, Mr. Speaker Sexton--91

A motion to reconsider was tabled.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

BILLS WITHDRAWN

On motion of Rep. Alexander, **House Bill No. 2013** was withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Warner, **House Bill No. 1639** was recalled from the State Government Committee and withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Haston, **House Bill No. 1726** was recalled from the Education Instruction Committee and withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Haston, **House Bill No. 1407** was recalled from the Education Administration Committee and withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. C. Johnson, **House Bill No. 1923** was recalled from the Commerce Committee and withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Baum, **House Bill No. 2083** was withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Beck, **House Bill No. 1942** was recalled from the Civil Justice Committee and withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Todd, **House Bill No. 2204** was withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Ragan, **House Bill No. 1894** was recalled from the Civil Justice Committee and withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Moon, **House Bill No. 1706** was recalled from the Local Government Committee and withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Powers, **House Bill No. 1771** was recalled from the Commerce Committee and withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Lamberth, **House Bill No. 2140** was withdrawn from the House.

On motion of Rep. Lamberth, **House Bill No. 2075** was withdrawn from the House.

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On motion of Rep. Lamberth, **House Bill No. 2076** was withdrawn from the House.

CLERK'S NOTE TO THE JOURNAL

Pursuant to **Rule No. 20**, Rep. Travis was excused from Session on Monday, January 31, 2022.

SPONSORS ADDED

Under **Rule No. 43**, the following members were permitted to add their names as sponsors as indicated below, the prime sponsor of each having agreed to such addition:

House Bill No. 335 Rep. Whitson as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 563 Rep. Moody as First prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 666 Rep. Beck as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 673 Rep. Gillespie as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 1661 Rep. Hardaway as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 1686 Rep. Casada as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 1842 Reps. Baum, Rudd and Sparks as prime sponsors.

House Bill No. 1859 Rep. Whitson as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 1867 Rep. Darby as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 1868 Rep. Towns as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 2002 Rep. Potts as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 2047 Rep. Powell as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 2050 Rep. Smith as prime sponsor.

House Bill No. 2086 Rep. Vaughan as prime sponsor.

SPONSORS WITHDRAWN

On Motion, Rep. Reedy withdrew as sponsor of **House Bill No. 794**.

REPORT OF CHIEF ENGROSSING CLERK
January 31, 2022

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MR. SPEAKER: Your Chief Engrossing Clerk begs leave to report that we have transmitted to the Governor the following: House Joint Resolutions Nos. 669, 670, 671, 672, 693, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707 and 708; for his action.

GREG GLASS, Chief Engrossing Clerk

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR
January 31, 2022

MR. SPEAKER: I am directed by the Governor to return herewith: House Joint Resolutions Nos. 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662 and 663; with his approval.

JONATHAN SKRMETTI, Chief Counsel to the Governor

ROLL CALL

The roll call was taken with the following results:

Present..... 92

Representatives present were Alexander, Baum, Beck, Boyd, Bricken, Byrd, Calfee, Campbell S, Camper, Carringer, Casada, Cepicky, Chism, Clemmons, Cochran, Cooper, Crawford, Curcio, Darby, Dixie, Eldridge, Farmer, Freeman, Gant, Garrett, Gillespie, Grills, Hakeem, Halford, Hall, Hardaway, Harris, Haston, Hawk, Hazlewood, Helton, Hicks G, Hicks T, Hodges, Holsclaw, Howell, Hulsey, Hurt, Jernigan, Johnson C, Johnson G, Keisling, Lafferty, Lamar, Lamberth, Leatherwood, Littleton, Love, Lynn, Mannis, Marsh, McKenzie, Miller, Mitchell, Moody, Moon, Ogles, Parkinson, Potts, Powell, Powers, Ragan, Ramsey, Reedy, Rudd, Rudder, Russell, Sexton J, Shaw, Sherrell, Smith, Sparks, Stewart, Terry, Thompson, Todd, Vaughan, Vital, Warner, Weaver, White, Whitson, Williams, Windle, Wright, Zachary, Mr. Speaker Sexton -- 92

RECESS

On motion of Rep. Lamberth, pursuant to **Senate Joint Resolution No. 891** the House stood in a brief recess prior to joining the Senate in Joint Convention to hear Governor Lee's State of the State Address at the conclusion of which the House stood in recess until 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, February 2, 2022.

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IN JOINT CONVENTION
STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS
MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2022

The hour having arrived, set by Senate Joint Resolution No. 891, the Senate met with the House in Joint Convention for the purpose of hearing the State of the State Address from Governor Bill Lee.

The Joint Convention was called to order by Mr. Speaker McNally, President of the Joint Convention.

On motion of Senator Johnson, the roll call of the Senate was dispensed with.

On motion of Representative Lamberth, the roll call for the House was dispensed with.

Thereupon, the Clerk of the Senate read Senate Joint Resolution No. 891, authorizing the Joint Convention.

Senator Johnson moved that the President of the Joint Convention appoint a Committee composed of five members from the Senate and five members from the House of Representatives to notify the Governor that the Joint Convention is in session and awaiting his arrival.

Mr. President McNally appointed Senators Akbari, Kyle, Jackson, Powers, White; Representatives Alexander, Camper, T. Hicks, Love and Russell. Rep. Russell served as Chair of the Committee.

BRIEF RECESS

Without objection, Mr. President McNally moved that the Joint Convention stand in recess pending the arrival of Governor Bill Lee.

RECESS EXPIRED

The recess having expired, the Joint Convention was called to order by Mr. President McNally.

Mr. President McNally recognized Rep. Russell at the entrance of the House Chamber, who stated "Mr. President McNally, the escort committee is proud to welcome Bill Lee, the 50th Governor of the State of Tennessee."

Mr. President McNally asked the Committee to escort Governor Bill Lee to the podium.

Mr. President McNally stated, "Members of the General Assembly, it is my distinguished pleasure to present to you the Governor of the Great State of Tennessee, the Honorable Bill Lee."

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STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS
BY GOVERNOR BILL LEE
JANUARY 31, 2022

Thank you very much. Lieutenant Governor McNally, Speaker Sexton, Speaker Pro Tem Haile, Speaker Pro Tem Marsh, Members of the 112th General Assembly, Justices, Constitutional Officers.

I first want to acknowledge someone who for the last three years has been a steadfast partner to me in this journey.

She has also been a faithful friend to Tennesseans in distressed counties through her Tennessee Serves initiative.

I'm so proud of the work she has done to provide underserved Tennesseans hundreds of thousands of meals, thousands of backpacks, and thousands of shoes for school children.

Tennesseans are proud of you, and I'm proud of you, Maria, our First Lady.

A spirit of humble service matters in times of trial, and it matters in times of prosperity –So I also want to thank members of my Cabinet and staff who are here tonight who have served Tennesseans tirelessly over the last year.

I'm thankful for each one of you. Thank you.

To everyone here and to everyone listening across this state, it is the highest honor I have to serve as your governor.

I am grateful that you have allowed me to serve in this position.

We stand here today in a different place than we were a year ago, but our gratitude to Tennesseans is unchanged.

You have kept this state moving forward.

Tennesseans like the members of the National Guard who have met the worst of circumstances with grit, and yet also provided comfort.

Nurses and other health care workers who have cared for the sick. Teachers and administrators who have taught our children.

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Troopers and police officers and sheriffs deputies who patrol the roads and keep our neighborhoods safe.

Small businesses who have kept their doors open and workers who have worked extra hours to keep our economy moving.

You are what makes Tennessee exceptional.

Last June, we commenced Untold Tennessee, a celebration of how the ordinary makes us extraordinary, to commemorate 225 years of statehood.

Folks along the way this year have shared with me the deep connection they feel to Tennessee.

Folks like my friend Wally Childress, whose family owns a century farm, Childress Farms, in West Tennessee, and has grown thousands of acres of crops since 1906.

Wally and Tracy are with us here tonight. We thank you for representing generations of families that have helped make Tennessee what it is. Please stand up, Wally and Tracy Childress.

For 225 years, Tennessee has been a beacon to those who wanted something more and needed a frontier to build their American dream.

In 1965, the General Assembly recognized this and passed a resolution to adopt the state slogan: "Tennessee - America at Its Best".

Over the years, leaders have reminded Tennesseans that America at Its Best is more than our slogan - it's our north star.

However, America at Its Best means something different today than it did in 1965 or even in the last decade.

I think about what was going on in our country in 1965 and the very real tension of becoming a more perfect Union.

There were moments of great optimism with the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

There were moments of tremendous innovation as Americans stepped into space.

Yet, there were also great challenges in 1965 as American combat troops landed in Vietnam, and the Civil Rights movement continued but with painfully slow progress.

Tennessee - America at Its Best embraces both sides of the coin: we acknowledge our shortcomings but build on our best.

It reminds me of the truth in Scripture: Great faith is required to keep pushing for the things not yet seen.

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Today, our country faces challenges of a different kind, but I believe now more than ever, Tennessee embodies America at Its Best.

And in order to ensure that, I am proposing a budget and America at Its Best policies that reinforce freedom, innovation, exceptionalism and optimism.

Freedom: Make Government Smarter & Smaller

If we are to embody America at Its Best, that starts with acknowledging that it is our Creator who endows us with freedom, and the government merely maintains that freedom.

I believe now more than ever, we must show great discipline and regard for our freedoms.

One way we do that is through a small government that contributes to a safe and well-ordered society.

In recent history, big government has attempted to take over society instead of contributing to it.

That's no way to live, and Tennessee has pushed back on that big government.

In fact, Tennessee has recently been ranked as one of the top five freest states in the country.

Folks around the country see this and are moving to our state in record numbers.

They are fleeing states with rising crime and plummeting support for police.

Bob and Darcy Armanino each served in the San Francisco Police Department for over 30 years. They recently packed up everything they had and left behind everything they'd known, in search, as they say, of more freedom. And they moved right down the road from me.

Bob and Darcy are our new California neighbors, and they represent thousands of new neighbors. They are here with us tonight, and we welcome them as new Tennesseans. Please stand and be recognized.

Law enforcement officials from across the country see Tennessee as a destination for more freedom.

Just late last year, we put out a call to officers from New York to LA who were facing restrictive mandates, and they responded.

We welcome these new Tennesseans who are committed to keeping our neighborhoods safe.

My budget adds 100 additional Highway Patrol Troopers and 50 new personnel to support the mission of the TBI.

We will also commit more than \$150 million directly into law enforcement agencies to create safer neighborhoods through the violent crime intervention grant fund.

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We are proposing more than \$350 million that will support a new law enforcement training academy to ensure we have the most professional force in the country.

Our funding commitment shows a respect for the rule of law but a rejection of the defund the police movement that we have seen across the country.

Both drug trafficking and human trafficking are on the rise in our country and in Tennessee.

This is unacceptable.

Last Wednesday, I spoke to 50 Tennessee National Guard soldiers the day before they were deployed to the Southern Border to fight the flow of fentanyl that is killing Tennesseans.

These men and women are deploying at a time when Border chaos is at an all-time high. America desperately needs our stability, especially on the Southern Border.

I thank Lt. Governor McNally and Speaker Sexton for their early support of this mission as it directly impacts the health and safety of our state.

We will continue our anti-human trafficking investments as Tennessee sends a loud message that those who participate in human trafficking will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

I also believe that communities of faith are critical to the preservation of American freedom.

Last year, I met with a group of Jewish leaders who conveyed their worries about safely worshiping while antisemitism is on the rise.

Recently, a shocked world watched as a Texas synagogue was taken hostage.

The rabbi credited the outcome to extensive safety training through partnership with their local law enforcement agency.

I have directed the Department of Safety and Homeland Security to create a plan so that every house of worship in our state can receive high quality safety training, and we will continue to protect Tennesseans' ability to worship freely.

A strong commitment to public safety includes a wise approach to criminal justice.

I want to thank the General Assembly for the criminal justice legislation that was passed last year.

In the last three years, we have expanded educational pathways. We have ensured every inmate has a photo ID. We have increased job opportunities for inmates.

Evidence clearly shows small efforts make a large impact on public safety, and we will build upon that.

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I recently had the remarkable privilege of placing a life-changing phone call with a man who served his time in prison and was back in society. In fact, he's a pastor now, here in Tennessee. But, he was living with many of the burdens that currently exist for those previously incarcerated. It was a call to grant clemency, but it ended up being a reminder to me that people who have served their debt to society for the mistakes that they have made can absolutely become productive, contributing citizens to their community if we will just clear a path.

Pastor Quantel Lindsey and his wife Kaley are here with us tonight, and we are honored that you are. Please stand and be recognized. I am honored you are here.

Innovation: Investing in the Future of Tennessee

The freedom to innovate requires a healthy balance sheet, but unfortunately, that's not something we're seeing at the national level.

The national debt recently surpassed \$29 trillion.

That amounts to more than \$220,000 per household.

We pay a staggering \$900 million per day in national debt interest payments.

This is a bipartisan problem working within a broken system, but states with balanced budgets offer a guide to what could be if Washington would just act.

While Washington saddles our kids with trillions of dollars of debt, Tennessee's strong fiscal position allows us to instead invest on their behalf.

Education, health care, infrastructure, and economic development - all areas where we can make smart and strategic investments that most states cannot.

In Tennessee, we've also prioritized efficiency.

Unlike many other states, since I've taken office, our employee headcount at our departments has actually reduced by five percent without making layoffs.

I thank members of the General Assembly for being partners in this prudent management approach.

While some are forecasting a recession, we remain prepared with a healthy savings account and minimal liabilities.

Our proposed budget will boost the Rainy-Day Fund to a highest-ever \$1.6 billion.

We have the financial capacity to innovate and approach key areas like education and infrastructure with fresh eyes.

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With the support of thousands of Tennessee parents, I am committing to updating the 30 year - old way we fund our K-12 public schools.

I'm proposing an innovative approach that sets aside dollars for each student, based on their individual needs, and these dollars will be used in whatever public school they attend.

We have spent months engaging parents, teachers, students and stakeholders in a fully transparent process across the entire state.

The Department of Education and partners in the General Assembly have received thousands of public comments, including more than 16 townhalls and meetings across the state.

I thank every Tennessean who participated in the process, especially those who served on our 18 subcommittees.

It's not just hundreds of millions of dollars on the line - it's our kids, their childhoods, and most importantly their futures.

Time and time again, we have heard the same message: we need a smarter, more transparent, accountable education funding formula, and the time is now.

A formula that prioritizes the needs of students above all else, and that pays particular attention to students with disabilities, rural students, low income-students, and students with other priority needs.

If we do this correctly, we can create a funding formula that demands accountability and rewards districts for performance, but most importantly funds students and not bureaucracies.

If we do this right, then and only then, can we feel confident investing the dollars that are needed for our public schools and the future of Tennessee.

Therefore, in tandem with this new funding formula, I am proposing \$1 billion in new, recurring education spending for our public schools across Tennessee. The proposal will be finalized in the coming days, and I look forward to working with you, the members of the General Assembly, to get this done.

This budget also includes one-time funding to expand high school and middle school career and technical opportunities so every student can graduate with the industry credential they need to join the workforce of tomorrow.

Let me tell you what else this one-time funding will be used for: I went to Waverly, TN af ter the devastating floods late last year.

The tragedy, the heartache, the loss was hard to take in. I walked into the elementary school where the water rose to four feet in 10 minutes.

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I saw desks and backpacks and books piled up against the door where water rushed out. If the Waverly flood happened on Friday instead of Saturday, we would be mourning the loss of hundreds of Tennessee children.

I am proposing one-time funding to ensure that no student in Tennessee attends a public school located in a flood zone.

While we are improving our funding strategy, we also need to empower parents with a candid look into not only how their children are learning but what they are learning.

The vast majority of parents believe they should be allowed to see books, curriculum and other items used in the classroom.

That's how I felt about my own kids, and I stand with those parents today.

We are proposing a new law that will ensure parents know what materials are available to students in their libraries.

This law will also create greater accountability at the local level so parents are empowered to make sure content is age-appropriate.

As we again work to make gains in elementary reading and mathematics, we will work to ensure students have tailored options in science, technology, engineering and technical training.

We will grow our investment in the Future Workforce Initiative by \$2.5 million and will propose new legislation to make computer science and coding available to every high school student in Tennessee.

We are seeing steady enrollment in our Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology when other academic disciplines have declined.

These Tennesseans stand ready to wire our houses, build our cars and nurse our sick back to health. We need them on the job now, not on a waitlist.

So, I am committing \$200 million in TCAT expansions to help double our skilled workforce by 2026 and ensure that any Tennessean wishing to further their education can immediately enroll in a TCAT.

Make no mistake - Tennessee is "Working People USA," and we will do whatever it takes to train and retrain Tennesseans so that both our businesses and our families can thrive.

The keepers of "Working People USA" have been our teachers.

When companies look to Tennessee for a pipeline of skilled workers, it is teachers who are busy preparing students for life beyond the classroom.

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We should raise teacher pay this year by \$125 million, which is a well-deserved increase into the teacher salary pool.

Historically, funds put in the salary pool don't always make it to deserving teachers. When we say teachers are getting a raise, there should be no bureaucratic workaround to prevent that.

In our updated funding formula, we will ensure a teacher raise is a teacher raise.

Increasing wages isn't enough to address a teacher shortage and record number of retirements.

In 2020, we launched a program to get more high school seniors to pursue teaching and even remain within the communities that raised them.

Our program, called Grow Your Own, is now nationally recognized as a model for building a pipeline of qualified educators.

It is the first time teaching has been recognized by the federal government as an apprenticeship pathway, and that path starts right here in Tennessee.

The Grow Your Own model is proof that giving kids real skills and a roadmap will solve the greatest challenges of the day.

So much of innovation begins with doing research and committing to reaching full potential.

At the higher education level, we're investing \$90 million in our nationally-highlighted outcomes-based funding formula.

With this level of funding, I would expect zero tuition increases for our public universities.

We are also proud to propose a series of research investments to ensure we stay on track to be America at Its Best.

Recently, the University of Memphis received a Carnegie R1 designation making it a top-tier school for research.

We will now have what's known as an R1 institution in each grand division.

We are proposing \$50 million toward a research endowment to propel work that will make Memphis a global leader in AgriTech, cybersecurity, and the digital workforce.

Meeting our full potential also means being home to some of the best historically black colleges and universities in the country.

Back in November 2020, the Speakers appointed a Joint Land Grant Committee, chaired by Representative Harold Love, to explore how the state can better understand the new needs of Tennessee State University.

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Today, I'm recommending a \$250 million dollar investment to improve the physical infrastructure at TSU.

Our commitment to innovation will continue east right through the Oak Ridge corridor.

We're investing more than \$70 million to complete the Oak Ridge Innovation Institute, which is a partnership with the University of Tennessee to invest in data science, technology, advanced materials, and much more.

For decades, East Tennessee has been home to some of the best kept secrets in nuclear energy and American innovation.

Today, many may not realize that Tennessee derives more power from nuclear energy than from any other source.

Recently, I visited the TVA's Watts Bar nuclear facility, the last nuclear facility to be built in America, to see firsthand how nuclear power keeps our grid dependable even when the weather is not.

Nuclear power is clean energy that actually works for the private sector.

It has enabled us to land major economic projects because not only is it clean, but it is also cheap to produce.

Tennessee's expanded nuclear potential rests at the Clinch River site as one of the few undeveloped, certified nuclear sites in the country.

We are working directly with TVA to formalize a long-term strategy so the Clinch River site can be part of powering America.

If we're going to have a real conversation about energy in America, it needs to be safe, cheap to produce, and reliable. I believe that conversation starts right here in Tennessee at the Clinch River site.

Our state is one of the fastest growing states in the country.

We have an obligation to future generations to invest in our roads and bridges to accommodate that economic growth.

My budget proposes accelerating the IMPROVE Act by allocating \$100 million to ensure progress on critical projects.

I'm also proposing more than \$170 million toward interchange improvements in 12 counties across the state that will propel economic growth in rural areas, because if we want to look at what's right about America, we've got to look at rural Tennessee.

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I'm also proposing more than \$250 million toward road infrastructure projects in the fastest growing counties.

All of these amount to well over \$600 million additional dollars invested in road infrastructure, over and above what was already in place, and that is what meeting our obligation to the future looks like.

Exceptionalism: Preserving What's Best About America

Earlier, I mentioned Tennesseans are what make our state exceptional.

I recently watched President Reagan's farewell address, made just before he left office in January of 1989.

As many other Presidents have done, his farewell address includes a warning to the American people.

He reminds us that what we want to have in this country is "informed patriotism."

Then, speaking about American history, he says, "If we forget what we did, we won't know who we are."

He said, "I'm warning of an eradication of the American memory that could result, ultimately, in an erosion of the American spirit."

But he offered a solution by saying: "Let's start with some basics: more attention to American history and a greater emphasis on civic ritual."

Some 30 years later, those words are still true, and now more than ever, it is important that we teach true American history, unbiased and non-political.

Two years ago, we launched the Governor's Civics Seal program which included grants to support public schools implementing high-quality civic education programs.

Since then, we've nearly tripled the size of the program, and thousands of Tennessee students have received this education, and we expect the opportunity to grow.

The Fordham Institute recently ranked us as one of the top five states for civics education.

I'm proud of the "informed patriots" graduating from our Tennessee schools.

But there is still more to do, especially if we want to provide Tennessee parents with more educational choices.

Two years ago, I traveled to Hillsdale College to participate in a Presidents Day celebration and spend time with champions of American exceptionalism.

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For decades, Hillsdale College has been the standard bearer in quality curriculum and the responsibility of preserving American liberty.

I believe their efforts are a good fit for Tennessee, and we are formalizing a partnership with Hillsdale to expand their approach to civics education and K-12 education.

Informed patriotism should stretch beyond the K-12 classroom and into higher education.

In many states, colleges and universities have become centers of anti-American thought, leaving our students not only ill-equipped but confused.

But, in Tennessee, there's no reason why our institutions of higher learning can't be an exceptional part of America at Its Best.

I'm including in my budget \$6 million to establish the Institute of American Civics at the University of Tennessee.

This will be a flagship for the nation - a beacon celebrating intellectual diversity at our universities and teaching how a responsible, civic-minded people strengthens our country and our communities.

However, our universities not only face internal threats, but are facing very real external threats as foreign powers target them to steal or influence American research.

The federal government estimates more than \$225 billion worth of intellectual property is stolen each year by China, much of this at institutions of higher learning.

Last year, we shut down Confucius Institutes at our public Tennessee universities to cut ties with an organization that is working for the Chinese Communist Party.

The State of Tennessee has to remain vigilant with regard to countries and foreign entities who don't have our best interests in mind.

Our administration has also strengthened our vetting approach to ensure we do not spend state dollars or incentivize any company doing the work of foreign adversaries.

We're doing this to protect our Tennessee economy, our taxpayer dollars and our American security.

Our state will continue to be a destination for other global companies who are honest brokers, and we welcome them to the table.

Good faith partnership is core to the American spirit.

And while we welcome foreign investment, we also welcome individuals from other countries who have legally made America home, and that is something we should always value.

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It's been said that Americans by birth need to spend time with Americans by choice from time to time to help remind us all of what makes this country so exceptional.

An American by choice who has impacted me is Rocky Ghazi. He is a Kurdish refugee from Iraq and a proud American citizen by choice. He also serves our state as a trooper in the Tennessee Highway Patrol.

Rocky and his wife Jeehan are here with us tonight, and we're proud that you call Tennessee home. Please stand and be recognized.

Optimism: Best State for Families

Tennessee fulfills America at Its Best because of our optimism.

Optimism that our best days are ahead of us, and that we can be the best place in the world for families to form and thrive.

My office has proposed and supported some of the soundest pro-life legislation in the country.

Thanks to our partners in the legislature, we passed thoughtful laws that protected the unborn and supported expecting mothers.

If the federal courts return full authority to the states, Tennessee's laws will automatically provide the maximum possible protection and offer a glimmer of redemption as America reconciles our troubled past.

I believe Tennessee can be a major part of that reconciliation by offering both hope and resources to families in crisis.

This begins with mothers and continuing big investments in their health.

TennCare's Health Starts Initiative will now have the funding to put an even greater emphasis on maternal health and holistic care for mothers and children.

Our support for families will continue through Tennessee Fosters Hope, where we have certified new foster families, offered trauma training statewide, recruited "foster friendly" businesses, and moved many children into forever homes.

I'm proposing the funding of relative caregiver placements which will allow extended families to keep loved ones close by. We are also proposing a childcare support program for all foster families, regardless of their DHS eligibility.

You can't be the best state for families unless you're the best state for all families. I believe we have significant work to do in improving access to health care for Tennessee families.

Because of our prudent fiscal management, we're making huge investments in rural healthcare in this budget. And that means actual care, not just keeping hospitals open.

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We need qualified, dedicated physicians and staff in rural areas.

We are dedicating more than \$18 million to attract 150 new primary care residents for rural Tennessee.

Because of the confidence we have in our block grant waiver, we are able to make significant investments in health care, including an additional \$55 million in our Medicaid Pathways to Independence program.

This simply means more benefits and smarter spending for our TennCare population.

We are dramatically expanding dental care for more than 600,000 TennCare recipients through a \$25 million dollar investment and working on a multi-year commitment to broaden dental services across the state.

It's no secret that the opioid epidemic has ravaged many of our communities all across Tennessee.

Therefore, we are increasing investment to support addiction recovery through mobile units and improved walk-in care.

In spite of this challenge of opioid addiction, we are at a hopeful moment thanks to a tireless fighter who serves our state.

Our Attorney General Herbert Slatery has worked to ensure every county in Tennessee is entitled to part of the \$26 billion dollar suit against pharmaceutical companies who fueled the opioid tragedy.

General Slatery is a national leader who was recently recognized as the Best Attorney General in America. General Slatery, please stand, and let Tennesseans say thank you for all you have done.

From education to infrastructure,

From economic development to healthcare,

This budget is bold and balanced, and most importantly, it doesn't ask Tennesseans for a penny more in taxes.

Members of the General Assembly, the state of our state is strong, and I look forward to working with you to make it stronger, yet.

Closing

Tennessee is, in fact a beacon for America, a harbinger of opportunity, of security, of freedom.

We are the reminder of what can be, but is not yet, very much like the formation of a more perfect Union.

Every child doesn't yet have access to a high-quality education.

Every neighborhood is not yet safe.

Every family doesn't yet have opportunity.

But what I know is this.

Every single member of the Tennessee General Assembly, every court justice, every constitutional officer, and this governor knows that if anybody can do it, Tennessee can.

In First Chronicles, scripture describes the leaders of ancient Israel at a particular time in its history.

These leaders are described as ones who understood their times and knew what they should do.

May we be those leaders.

May we ensure that the beacon that is Tennessee - America at Its Best - shines brighter than ever before.

May the Lord grant His favor upon the great state of Tennessee. Thank you.

GAVEL TO SPEAKER SEXTON

President McNally relinquished the gavel to Speaker Sexton.

Thereupon, the purpose for which the Joint Convention was called having been accomplished, Mr. President Sexton declared the Joint Convention dissolved.